Northeast Region
Ministry of Natural Resources

Northeast Zone
Ontario Parks

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

TEMAGAMI INTEGRATED PLANNING

ONTARIO PARKS

Temagami Crown Land Recreation

Conservation Reserves

CR 32 East Lady Evelyn Lake
CR 33 Sugar Lake
CR 44 Bob Lake
CR 50 Pinetorch Lake
CR 52 Jim Edwards Lake
CR 53 North Yorston
CR 55 Smith Lake
C 1608 Makobe Grays Ice Margin

Provincial Parks

Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater
Makobe-Grays River
Obabika River
Solace
Sturgeon River

Ontario

July 2006

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July 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

The Ontario Ministry of Natural resources is preparing management plans for five provincial parks and eight conservation reserves in the Temagami area. In addition, a recreation management plan is being prepared for the unregulated Crown lands within the Temagami administrative area covered by the 1997 *Temagami Land Use Plan*.

The provincial parks and conservation reserves include the following:

Provincial Parks
- Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater
- Makobe-Grays River
- Obabika River
- Solace
- Sturgeon River

Conservation Reserves
- Bob Lake
- East Lady Evelyn Lake
- Jim Edwards Lake
- Makobe Grays Ice Margin
- North Yorston
- Pinetorch Lake
- Smith Lake
- Sugar Lake

We are pleased to present this Management Options document for the integrated planning process. This document outlines the key issues that have been raised since the initiation of the planning process and presents options for managing the parks, conservation reserves and recreation use for the unregulated Crown lands.

The Ministry of Natural Resources invites you to review and provide comments on this Management Options document. For your convenience, an accompanying Workbook is provided for comments. It summarizes the issues and encourages reviewers to provide feedback for their preferred options using a checkbox and comment format. All comments are welcomed whether submitted using the Workbook, letters or e-mail.

Please take the opportunity to participate by attending one of the open houses scheduled for this summer and by submitting your comments to:

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Your comments and participation are very important to the development of the Preliminary Management Plans for the parks and conservation reserves and the Recreation Plan for the remaining Crown land outside of these protected areas. All comments will be carefully considered throughout the integrated planning process.

Yours truly,

Adair Ireland-Smith
Managing Director
Ontario Parks—MNR

Rob Galloway
Regional Director
Northeast Region—MNR

Executive Summary of Management Options

The Temagami Integrated Planning (TIP) process combines three planning projects which were identified in the 1997 *Temagami Land Use Plan*. The three components are:

- management planning for five backcountry parks (wilderness and waterway);
- management planning for eight conservation reserves which lie adjacent to the parks; and
- a recreation plan for unregulated Crown lands in the Temagami administrative area (part of MNR's North Bay District).

Located 100 km north of North Bay, the Temagami area covers approximately 650,000 hectares of varied and rugged terrain. Much of the area is relatively remote, offering solitude and challenge for those seeking a backcountry recreation experience.

Five provincial parks covering 104,248 hectares lie in the western part of Temagami. Surrounding the parks are eight conservation reserves which make up an additional 42,836 hectares of protected area. The remaining land base subject to the TIP process consists of unregulated Crown lands.

The Temagami area is renowned for its rugged landscape as well as its significant natural, cultural and recreational resources. Temagami has been a tourist destination for over a century, with numerous lakes and rivers which offer excellent boating, canoeing and fishing. There are over 2,400 kilometers of interconnecting canoe routes and portage trails. Recreational use is quite high, with a 1995 survey estimating over 60,000 visitor days of wilderness canoeing and other backcountry use. The current lack of maintenance and visitor management, particularly in the heavily used areas, has lead to the deterioration of recreational resources and a decline in the quality of visitor experience.

Aboriginal peoples have traveled and lived throughout the area for over 6000 years. Indeed, many trails have been in use for thousands of years as *nastawgan*, the traditional routes of the Teme-Augama Anishnabai. Native culture and land use continue with the First Nation communities of Bear Island and Matachewan.

The three planning components—provincial parks, conservation reserves and recreation management on Crown land—are being integrated because there is a strong inter-relationship between them; all provide relatively remote recreational experiences, share similar patterns of access and use, as well as raise environmental and social concerns. By combining all three components, the TIP process allows us to consider how management decisions on one land base might impact on adjacent areas. While integrating into one process, each has distinctive legislation, permitted uses and management requirements.

The integrated planning process will produce a number of planning products: a park management plan for five parks, a resource management plan for eight conservation reserves, and a Crown land recreation plan for unregulated Crown lands. The recreation plan will address only the recreational aspects of Crown lands; all other land uses will continue to receive direction from the *Temagami Land Use Plan*.-

The overall framework for this integrated planning effort is based upon Ontario's provincial park planning process. This process includes the following stages, with opportunities for public consultation at each stage:

1. Terms of Reference
2. Background Information
3. Management Options
4. Preliminary Management Plans
5. Approved Management Plans

We are currently at the Management Options stage.

This Management Options document summarizes key concerns that were raised through a series of open houses and focus group meetings throughout the summer and fall of 2005 and the winter of 2006. Issues and opportunities explored at this stage include the following topics. Some are specific to parks and conservation reserves while others pertain to recreational use throughout the Temagami area. These include:

- Mechanized access into the parks and conservation reserves: aircraft, motor boats, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles.
- Boat caches on Crown land, in conservation reserves and parks.
- Maintenance of recreation facilities on Crown land and conservation reserves, and the potential for local economic opportunities
- The protection of natural, cultural and recreational features and values within the wilderness and waterway parks and conservation reserves.
- Restoring and maintaining ecological integrity within the parks and conservation reserves.
- Visitor distribution, management, information and education to ensure the sustainable use of Temagami's backcountry recreational resources.

For each topic, a number of options are presented which reflect the range of comment which was received. It must be noted that the three land base types—parks, conservation reserves and Crown land—each have their own distinct legislation and policies which direct the level of protection and/or the types of use within these areas.

Public input and review is important. A series of open houses and meetings will be held this summer to present this document and to gather public input. Readers are invited to indicate their preferred option and supporting comments, or offer additional options beyond what has been presented. The planning team will consider and evaluate all input and comments as well as policies and legislation when developing the preliminary management plans—the next stage of this integrated process.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction 1
1.1 Where are we in the planning process? 1
1.2 Policy Context 2
1.3 An Integrated Planning process 2
1.4 Management Options—your comments are important 2

2.0 Issues and Options: Crown Land Recreation Plan 4
Introduction 4
2.1 Maintenance of the unregulated Crown land recreational land base. 4
2.2 Private and commercial caching of boats on unregulated Crown land 6
2.3 ATV Conflicts on Existing Portage Trails on Crown Land 7
2.4 A Visitor Management System for Unregulated Crown Land and Conservation Reserves 8
2.5 Use of Lake Temagami campsites by house boaters 9
2.6 Adventure racing and "extreme" sports 10
2.7 Motorized access in general 10
2.8 Aircraft Landing 10
2.9 Research Requirements: Use and Impact Studies in the Planning Area 11

3.0 Issues and Options: All Conservation Reserves within TIP 12
Introduction 12
3.1 Maintenance of recreational facilities in conservation reserves 13
3.2 Conflict between use of existing portage trails by canoeists or hikers and their use by those traveling by ATV 14
3.3 Unregulated Crown land and Conservation Reserves Visitor Management System 15
3.4 Adventure racing and "extreme" sports 16
3.5 Protection of sensitive features, such as the parabolic dune complex or esker kame complex in East Lady Evelyn Lake CR 16

4.0 Issues and Options: Specific Conservation Reserves Within TIP 18
4.1 Pinetorch Lake Conservation Reserve 18
4.2 East Lady Evelyn Lake, Sugar Lake, Bob Lake, Smith Lake CRs 19

5.0 Issues and Options: Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Wilderness Park and Four Waterway Parks: Makobe-Grays River, Obabika River, Solace and Sturgeon River 20
Introduction 20
Provincial Park Goals and Objectives 20
Park Classification 21
Park Zoning 21
Provincial Park Operations in Temagami's Backcountry Parks 24
Provincial Parks Management Policies 24
Protecting the Environment 24
Management Options 25
5.1 Aircraft Landings in Provincial Parks 25
5.2 Future Use of the Liskeard Lumber Road in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park 28
5.3 Motorboat Use in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park 31

5.4 Boat Caches (private and commercial) within the wilderness and waterway parks 32
5.5 Wilderness Snowmobile Trail (former TOPS A206) Through Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater 33
5.6 General All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Use 35
5.7 Commercial Land Use Permits Within the Provincial Parks 36
5.8 Other Topics 37
Topics to be addressed in the Preliminary Management Plan 37

6.0 Next Steps 39

7.0 References 40

1.0 Introduction

The Temagami Integrated Planning (TIP) project was initiated by the Minister of Natural Resources in June of 2004. Through TIP, the Ministry of Natural Resources will develop a management plan for one wilderness and four waterway class provincial parks, a management plan for eight conservation reserves (CRs) located adjacent to the five provincial parks, and a Crown land recreation plan applicable to the unregulated Crown land within the Planning Area. The TIP project is not about making changes to the existing *Temagami Land Use Plan*; rather, it will implement aspects of the plan. TIP will neither create new protected areas, nor reduce the size of any of the existing protected areas.

This Management Options document should be read in conjunction with previously released Background Information document (2005) which provides more context as well as a series of maps for reference.

Both documents are available in both print and electronic formats. They are available electronically at: http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/tema_planning.html. A print version may be requested through the contact information on page 3.

Aboriginal communities have existed in the Temagami area for thousands of years. Local First Nations have expressed an ongoing interest in, and have shared knowledge of the Temagami and surrounding area with the planning team. Any communications and cooperation between Aboriginal communities and MNR for planning and operations purposes will be done without prejudice to any future discussions or negotiations between the government of Ontario and Aboriginal communities.

Nothing in this plan shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from the protection provided for the existing Aboriginal or treaty rights of the Aboriginal people of Canada as recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

1.1 Where are we in the planning process?

An invitation to participate in the TIP project was issued to the public in June of 2004. This was followed by release of the Background Information document for public review and comment in August of 2005.

Development and public review of this Management Options document is the next step in the planning process. This document includes information regarding ideas about how each of the above Crown land areas could be managed or how issues related to their management could be addressed.

All members of the public and all stakeholders are invited to review this document and provide comments to the TIP project planning team. The planning team will take into consideration the comments received when developing preliminary plans for the affected provincial parks, conservation reserves and unregulated Crown land in the Temagami Planning Area.

1.2 Policy Context

The Temagami Integrated Planning (TIP) project has its basis in Ontario's provincial parks policy, conservation reserve policy and the *Temagami Land Use Plan*. These policies or documents commit the Ministry of Natural Resources to:

1. Develop management plans for Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater, Makobe-Grays River, Obabika River, Solace and Sturgeon River provincial parks.
2. Develop a resource management plan for conservation reserves within the planning area which include Bob Lake, East Lady Evelyn Lake, Jim Edwards Lake, Makobe-Grays Ice Margin, North Yorston, Pinetorch Lake, Smith Lake and Sugar Lake conservation reserves, and
3. Develop a Crown land recreation plan for the remaining unregulated Crown land within the planning area.

Through TIP, the above-noted policy commitments will be addressed.

The management plan for the five provincial parks subject to TIP will include decisions regarding the zoning and permitted uses within each of the parks, in accordance with Ontario Parks' policy. Similarly, the management plan for the conservation reserves will provide more detailed resource management direction beyond that which is already included in the Temagami Land Use Plan.

Finally, the Crown land recreation plan will address outstanding issues regarding management of the recreational Crown land base within the planning area.

1.3 An Integrated Planning process

To ensure a consistent approach, the three planning components have been integrated into one overall planning process. All three planning components are strongly interrelated. For this reason, the planning process will explore ecological, social and recreational linkages between the interconnected parks and conservation reserves. The final plans will outline the management objectives and the desired future condition for each of the five parks and the eight adjoining conservation reserves. Resource management planning for the parks and CRs will be carried out to ensure that ecological integrity is maintained.

The management of recreation on unregulated Crown land in the planning area will deal specifically with issues related to user distribution, access, maintenance or development of recreational features such as campsites, trails and portages, as well as options for funding these activities. In all other aspects, the management of resources within these Crown lands will be guided by the *Temagami Land Use Plan*.

1.4 Management Options—your comments are important

Included in this Management Options document are descriptions of the various topics and issues which need to be addressed for the parks, conservation reserves and unregulated Crown lands subject to the TIP process. These topics or issues have been

identified by MNR staff, through review of policy documents, or by the public during previous stages in this planning process.

The management options section of the document is divided into the following three subsections: recreation management on unregulated Crown lands, conservation reserves and provincial parks. Readers will notice that, in many cases, there is significant overlap between issues. A brief description of each issue follows its identification. Subsequently, an identification and description of different management options to address each issue is provided.

You are invited to provide your comments about the issues and possible management options to the planning team. A separate ***workbook*** has been produced to assist in collecting this information. The workbook is available in hard copy as well as electronic formats.

You are encouraged to indicate which management option you prefer, with reasons supporting their position if possible. Your identification of new options which have not been identified in this document is also welcomed. Your input is most helpful to the planning team.

Comments should be directed to:

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2.0 Issues and Options: Crown Land Recreation Plan

Introduction

This section of the document addresses resource management options associated with Temagami's unregulated Crown land base. The *Temagami Land Use Plan* included a paper entitled The Temagami Recreation Area Strategy, together with the Terms of Reference for this planning project and the previously released Background Information document, set the stage for proposing approaches to Crown land recreation maintenance. If ultimately selected, many details associated with these approaches will have to be worked out. However, broad concepts are presented in this document, in part, to gauge public and stakeholder reaction to their pursuit.

2.1 Maintenance of the unregulated Crown land recreational land base.

Discussion

Until the early 1990s, the Ministry of Natural Resources played an active role in maintenance of Temagami's recreational Crown land base, including campsites, portages and unofficial camping areas, making use of programs such as the Ontario Ranger program to provide staff and resources to enable such things as canoe route, portage and campsite maintenance to occur.

Changing government priorities and a refocusing by MNR on its core business led to discontinuance of the Crown Land recreation maintenance program by the provincial government in the early 1990s. The shortfall in recreational maintenance was recognized in the approved *Temagami Land Use Plan* in its paper The Temagami Recreation Area Strategy. Since that time, some tourism operations, youth camps and other users have taken it upon themselves to provide some level of maintenance to those selected canoe routes and campsites on Crown Land of which they make the most use. In addition MNR–Ontario Parks commenced the operation and active management of the five provincial parks covered in this planning process in 2004.

The Temagami Area is a significant recreational area, offering opportunities for economic development and outdoor recreation. Successful promotion of recreational opportunities in the Temagami Area depends on consistent efforts to maintain the existing recreational features across the entire Area, thereby providing all visitors with a high quality experience.

Management Options

Option 1: No change from current status:

- no formal maintenance program for Crown land recreation, including campsites, canoe routes, portages

- some maintenance of some canoe routes and campsites may occur through the good will and efforts of individuals
- continued concentration of campers, boaters and canoeists on those few campsites and canoe routes, accelerating human impact on these locations

Option 2: Maintenance of the recreational land base through external partnership opportunities and arrangements

Strategy 1: Development of partnerships between MNR and one or more external groups or stakeholders, such as municipalities, local First Nations or stakeholders to take over responsibility for recreational land base maintenance.

Important information for readers:

- Creation of maintenance partnerships would carry with it the requirement to establish fees for use of unregulated Crown land within the planning area.

- From an access perspective, there are relatively few main points of entry into the Temagami Planning Area, thereby facilitating the collection of fees for different uses of Crown land through a partnership.

- The charging and collecting of fees for use of Crown land is a relatively new concept in Ontario, although it occurs in many other jurisdictions in North America. As such, it carries with it, some challenges in development, approval and implementation.

- In considering the development of maintenance partnerships and the application of user fees, users should recognize that financially viable partnerships require that revenues must, at the very least, equal costs. More accessible parts of the land base represent areas of heavy use, where maintenance costs are lower and the potential to generate revenue is high. In contrast, less accessible back-country areas, where levels of use tend to be lower, require significantly greater expenditure in terms of maintenance.

  There are a range of possibilities to consider:

  (a) Establish permit system and fees for recreational use of unregulated Crown land, which may include day use, overnight camping, boat caching, etc. across the entire planning area, including road accessible crown land camping areas.

  (b) Establish permit system and fees for many recreational uses of unregulated Crown land, while establishing a free-permit system for some activities such as day use or boat caching.

  (c) Establish a permit system and fees for overnight camping only across the entire unregulated Crown land base.

  (d) Development and distribution of educational materials regarding appropriate and responsible recreational use of the land base could be one component of a maintenance partnership's responsibility.

(e) Should maintenance also be undertaken within the other existing conservation reserves within the planning area, which are not part of the TIP process? These are: Rabbit Lake West, White Bear Forest, Ottertail Creek, Temagami Island North, Narrows Island, South Temiskaming Shoreline & Indian Bay South conservation reserves

Strategy 2: Tendering of maintenance to one or more private contractors, under the direction of, but not in partnership with, MNR.

- This strategy is similar to *Strategy 1*, with the same possible considerations, including establishing fees for use, except that maintenance of the recreational land base would be tendered to one or more private contractors under the direction of, but not in partnership with, MNR and without a requirement to involve local municipalities or First Nations.

2.2 Private and commercial caching of boats on unregulated Crown land

Discussion

Caching (or storage) of boats on Crown land is an activity which has occurred for many years. It is undertaken by both private users of Crown land and commercial businesses in order to simplify boating on remote lakes. Cached boats can be used by recreationists who need only bring with them a small motor or paddles. Unfortunately, in some locations, so many boats have been cached, cached in inappropriate locations or abandoned that conflicts with other users have resulted. For example, dozens of boats have been cached on the north shore of Driftwood Lake where it intersects with the portage from Iceland Lake to the north. Many of these cached boats are stored directly or almost directly in the path of the portage between these two lakes. This results in a conflict between users in locations where boat caching is very popular, detracting from recreational experiences and making portaging and launching of non-cached boats more difficult then necessary.

Management Options:

Option 1: No change from current status

- Existing boat cache user conflicts will continue unaddressed in some locations

Option 2: Establish a boat cache management system and apply it to all boat caches within the planning area. Management system could address locations and limitations on boat caching as well as requirement to obtain permits for such activity.

- Management system would apply to all boat caching, be it for personal or commercial purposes

Option 3: Establish a boat cache management system and apply it on an as-needed basis to lakes and boat caches within the planning area.

- Management system would apply to all boat caching, be it for personal or commercial purposes, but would only be applied in locations where problems (user conflicts) have been identified.

Option 4: Prohibit boat caching of any kind within the planning area.

2.3 ATV Conflicts on Existing Portage Trails on Crown Land

Discussion

While not thought to be a widespread problem, the Temagami Land Use Plan indicates in a number of locations (for both integrated management areas and special management areas) that MNR should develop a strategy to address the concern of ATV travel on various portage trails throughout the planning area. ATV use of portages can, in some cases, have significant effects on the recreational experience of other users since motorized and non-motorized travelers may not share an appreciation of each group's desired experience. ATV use of portage trails tends to widen the portage over time, to accommodate wider vehicles or to navigate around wet locations. In addition, if ATVs are used inappropriately, or during periods when portage trails are soft or wet, serious damage to portage trails such as rutting and eventually erosion can occur.

Management Options

Option 1: No change from current status

- Existing conflict between users on some portage trails continues unaddressed

Option 2: Prohibit all ATV use of known portage trails within the planning area.

- Implementation of this option could occur through appropriate signage of portage trails under the *Public Lands Act*
- If a decision is made to create maintenance partnerships, these partnerships could also assume some responsibility in monitoring and reporting on success in prohibiting ATV use of portage trails

Option 3: Prohibit ATV use of portage trails where there is an identified environmental issue or conflict with other users.

- Implementation of this option could occur through appropriate signage of portage trails under the *Public Lands Act*
- If a decision is made to create maintenance partnerships, these partnerships could also assume some responsibility in monitoring and reporting on success in prohibiting ATV use of portage trails

2.4 A Visitor Management System for Unregulated Crown Land and Conservation Reserves

Discussion

At the present time, use of unregulated Crown land and of conservation reserves within the planning area is not controlled in any manner. The current lack of any Crown land recreation maintenance program, and ad hoc canoe route and campsite maintenance by some users has resulted in a concentration of users, especially canoeists, in some areas and on some routes. This concentration of users reduces the quality of the recreational experience, especially where some level of solitude is sought. In addition, user concentration can greatly increase the effects of human use on different areas. Soil compaction, vegetation removal and nutrient enrichment of water courses are some of the direct impacts on the environment from human use of recreational lands, affecting both unregulated Crown land and the values to be protected in CRs. The impacts resulting from human use are accelerated when visitor use is concentrated in smaller areas.

The Temagami Area is a significant recreational area, offering opportunities for economic development and outdoor recreation. Successful promotion of recreational opportunities in the Temagami Area depends on consistent efforts to maintain the existing recreational features across the entire area, thereby providing all visitors with a high quality experience.

Management Options:

Option 1: No change from current status

- Visitors would continue to make use of the area in an unregulated and uncontrolled manner
- Continued concentration of users in some areas and a lack of users in other potentially equally suitable areas

Option 2: Development of partnerships between MNR and one or more external groups or stakeholders, such as municipalities, local First Nations or stakeholders, having responsibility to develop and implement a visitor management system in cooperation and under the direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

- The maintenance partnership could have responsibility to monitor and control the number of permits which are issued for recreational activities such as overnight camping within a given area over a specified period of time
- The maintenance partnership could promote use of alternate areas within the planning area, encouraging better distribution of users
- The maintenance partnership, under the direction of MNR, would be required to develop and implement a locally based fee schedule for different uses and users of unregulated Crown land, in consideration of a wide variety of factors, such as local residency, nature of business being affected, other existing permits or licenses held by recreationists
- Development and distribution of educational materials regarding appropriate and responsible recreational use of the land base could be one component of a maintenance partnership's responsibility in close consultation with MNR.

Option 3: Tendering of responsibility for development and implementation of a visitor management system for Temagami to one or more private contractors.

- Under this option, development and implementation of a visitor management system affecting the recreational land base would be tendered to one or more private contractors, under the direction of MNR, but not through a partnership arrangement. This option would not carry with it a requirement to involve local municipalities or First Nations. This contracted service would be directed to provide all of the visitor controls noted in Option #2.

2.5 Use of Lake Temagami campsites by house boaters

Discussion

Although it is a fairly localized issue, a conflict does exist between the power boaters and canoeists on Lake Temagami and the houseboat users all wishing to make use of campsites on the lake. Conflicts arise due to the fact that boaters and canoeists perceive house boaters who make use of shore land camp sites as occupying a site when they already carry with them their own "accommodation". The issue may not be as simple as that however. House boaters may in some cases require or desire to use shore land campsites in order to reduce overnight crowding on houseboats, or to obtain some level of privacy for users. Clearly everyone is entitled to make use of shore land campsites. The key to successfully addressing this issue is for parties to be considerate of the needs and desires of others as much as possible. In addition, some separation of users could be considered.[1]

Management options:

Option 1: No change from current status

- If decision is made to charge fees for recreational use of Crown land, then an opportunity will exist to encourage campsite users to be considerate of others and share a limited resource

Option 2: Prohibit use of shore land campsites by house boaters

Option 3: Identify Lake Temagami campsites which are available only to those not traveling by houseboat; post such campsites to recognize which user group(s) are authorized to occupy them

- Could establish a discreet number of sites throughout Lake Temagami which are not to be occupied by those traveling by houseboat
- Most campsites would continue to be available to all users

[1] As noted in the TIP Background Information document, the Crown land recreation component of TIP will include all unregulated Crown land subject to the *Temagami Land Use Plan*, including all Crown lands within MA 39, plus all Crown islands in Lake Temagami. With respect to the Crown lands which will form part of the Indian Reserve in settlement of the Temagami Land Claim, including those lands which will become part of the Lake Temagami Waterway Provincial Park, TIP will include planning for only water based recreation consistent with the *TLUP*.

2.6 Adventure racing and "extreme" sports

Discussion

An emerging issue which may need to be addressed in the future is use of the Crown land base to support adventure racing or other extreme sports which are gaining some popularity, and which are not addressed in any way in the existing *Temagami Land Use Plan*.

At present, many activities one might associate with adventure racing or other extreme sports, such as canoeing and hiking, are permitted on Temagami's unregulated Crown land base. Motorized recreation is generally prohibited within Temagami's Special Management Areas. In addition, agreements are in place to control known off-road vehicle events.

While the question of adventure racing or other extreme sports has been raised, it is not within the purview of this planning process to provide a definitive position of where such activities can or cannot occur on the unregulated Crown land base beyond the direction already included in the *TLUP*. Activity components of adventure racing will be governed by the permitted use policies. As well, known off-road vehicle events will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and controlled through use of existing agreements.

2.7 Motorized access in general

Discussion

Overall, the question of motorized access within the unregulated Crown land base has been addressed by the Temagami Land Use Plan which created two land use areas: integrated management areas and special management areas. Within special management areas (SMAs), levels of motorized public access which existed at the time of the plan's approval were to be recognized, but not enhanced or expanded in any way, despite construction of new industrial access roads. All roads constructed within SMAs since 1997 are closed to motorized public travel (except by snowmobile). Construction of new trails to permit motorized travel, such as by ATVs or snowmobile is also prohibited within SMAs.

Additional work by the Ministry of Natural Resources, outside the TIP project, is required to improve implementation of the direction and decisions included in the *TLUP* regarding motorized public access to the unregulated Crown land base.

2.8 Aircraft Landing

Discussion

In accordance with the existing *Temagami Land Use Plan*, aircraft, be they commercially or privately owned and operated are permitted to land within all integrated or special management areas in the planning area. No specific issues regarding any lakes within the unregulated Crown land base have been identified through the TIP project.

2.9 Research Requirements: Use and Impact Studies in the Planning Area

Discussion

It has been suggested by some participants that no changes should be made in respect to management of the unregulated Crown land base until scientific studies have been undertaken to determine if real negative environmental effects have resulted from existing levels and types of uses as well as current lack of Crown land maintenance.

Large amounts of good quality information regarding the existing effects of recreational land use on the environment might result from development and implementation of such studies. However, their cost, from both a monetary and temporal perspective is considered prohibitive both in real terms and when weighed against the potential benefits associated with their completion.

Many of the environmental effects or current conditions which will be addressed through the TIP project, have been subjectively defined or relate to aesthetics and recreational experiences of different users. As a result, there is both little to be gained by delaying action until studies have been completed, as well as the probability that while studies were being completed recreationists will experience additional 'losses', which is unacceptable.

Notwithstanding the preceding, academic research regarding the effects of recreational land use in the planning area will be encouraged whenever possible; resultant information will be used to inform future decisions.

3.0 Issues and Options: All Conservation Reserves within TIP

Introduction

Conservation Reserves are one of two types of protected areas within the Province of Ontario, the other being provincial parks. Upon proclamation of Ontario's new *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act* (2006), creation and management of CRs will no longer fall under the *Public Lands Act*, but instead will occur under the new *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*. In accordance with this new Act, it must be recognized that maintaining the ecological integrity for which specific conservation reserves were created is the first priority when planning and managing CRs. Once the new Act is proclaimed, MNR will review any decisions made regarding management of the CRs to ensure consistency with provisions of the new Act.

Seven of the eight conservation reserves subject to TIP project lie within the area of Crown land addressed in the *Temagami Land Use Plan*. The eighth, Makobe-Grays Ice-Margin is located just north of the *TLUP* area, and was created through the Ontario Living Legacy process. These conservation reserves were created in order to provide protection to high quality, remote tourism and recreational values, high quality fisheries, headwaters of Lady-Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park, and representation of natural heritage values. Many of the CRs provide protection to significant canoe routes, some of which link canoe routes on unregulated Crown land with those in provincial parks.

Land use direction for the seven CRs covered by the Temagami Land Use Plan is included in that plan. In this regard, the TLUP includes specific descriptions of values and uses, concerns, management objectives and management strategies for each of the seven CRs. In addition, detailed tables of permitted uses are included. Where the Temagami Land Use Plan is silent with respect to a proposed use, Ministry staff consult the provincial Crown Land Use Policy Atlas (CLUPA), for a decision as to whether or not the activity is permitted. When both the *TLUP* and the CLUPA address a specific activity, the direction provided in the TLUP shall prevail.

With respect to the Makobe-Grays Ice-Margin CR, land use direction and permitted uses are set out in the Provincial Crown Land Use Policy Atlas.

As noted in the Crown Land Recreation section of this document, new and innovative approaches to the management of conservation reserve use are discussed in this section. These approaches have their basis partly in the Temagami Recreation Area Strategy. The Terms of Reference for this planning project and the previously released Background Information document included reference to some of the concepts presented here. If ultimately selected, many details associated with some of these new and innovative approaches will have to be worked out. However, broad concepts are presented in this document, in part, to gauge public and stakeholder reaction to their pursuit.

Development of new facilities, such as trails, access points or lookout structures within conservation reserves is subject to consideration and planning under the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves*.

3.1 Maintenance of recreational facilities in conservation reserves

Discussion

As with unregulated Crown land in the Temagami area, the question of maintenance of the recreational facilities in the eight conservation reserves is one which must be addressed.

The TIP conservation reserves contribute to the significance of Temagami as a recreational area. They offer opportunities for economic development and recreational opportunities. Successful promotion of recreational opportunities in the Temagami Area depends on consistent efforts to maintain the existing recreational features across the entire area, including conservation reserves, thereby providing all visitors with a high quality experience.

Management Options

Option 1: No change from current status:

- no formal maintenance program for recreational features in conservation reserves, including campsites, canoe routes, portages
- some maintenance of some canoe routes and campsites may occur through the good will and efforts of individuals
- continued concentration of campers, boaters and canoeists on those few campsites and canoe routes, accelerating human impact on these locations

Option 2: Maintenance of the recreational features in conservation reserves through external partnerships and arrangements.

Strategy 1: Development of partnerships between MNR and one or more external groups or stakeholders, such as municipalities, local First Nations or stakeholders to undertake recreational land base maintenance within the subject conservation reserves

- Creation of maintenance partnerships would carry with it the requirement to establish fees for use of conservation reserves.

Considerations:

(a) Establish permit system and fees for all recreational use of conservation reserves, including day use, overnight camping, boat caching.

(b) Establish permit system and fees for many recreational uses of conservation reserves, while establishing a free- permit system for some activities such a boat caching.

(c) Establish a permit system and fee for overnight camping only within these Conservation Reserves.

Strategy 2: Tendering of maintenance to one or more private contractors, under the direction of, but not in partnership with, MNR.

- This option includes the same two sub-options as noted above. However, under this option, maintenance of the recreational features in CRs would be tendered to one or more private contractors, under the direction of, but not in partnership with, MNR and without a requirement to involve local municipalities or First Nations.

3.2 Conflict between use of existing portage trails by canoeists or hikers and their use by those traveling by ATV

Discussion

While not thought to be a widespread problem, in respect to the Bob Lake and Pinetorch Lake CRs, the *Temagami Land Use Plan* indicates that MNR should develop a strategy to address the concern with ATV use of portage trails. ATV use of portages can, in some cases, have significant effects on the recreational experience of other users since motorized and non-motorized travelers may not share an appreciation of the other. ATV use of portages trails tends to widen such trails over time, to accommodate wider vehicles or to navigate around wet terrain. In addition, if ATVs are used inappropriately, or during periods when portage trails are soft or wet, serious damage to portage trails such as rutting and eventually erosion, can occur. Protection of the ecological integrity of conservation reserves remains of paramount importance in the planning and management of conservation reserves.

Management Options

Option 1: No change from current status

- Existing conflict between users on some portage trails continues unaddressed

Option 2: Prohibit all ATV use of known portage trails within the CRs.

- Implementation of this option could occur through appropriate signage of portage trails under the *Public Lands Act* or subsequent legislation.
- If a decision is made to develop maintenance partnership, those partnerships could also assume some responsibility in monitoring and reporting on success in prohibiting ATV use of portage trails

Option 3: Prohibit ATV use of portage trails where issue has been identified within the *Temagami Land Use Plan* and other CRs where the issue is identified in the future

- Implementation of this option could occur through appropriate signage of portage trails under the *Public Lands Act* or subsequent legislation.

- If a decision is made to develop maintenance partnerships, those partnerships could also assume some responsibility in monitoring and reporting on success in prohibiting ATV use of portage trails

3.3 Unregulated Crown land and Conservation Reserves Visitor Management System

Discussion

At the present time use of unregulated Crown land and of conservation reserves within the planning area is neither regulated nor controlled in any manner. The current lack of any Crown land recreation maintenance program has resulted in a concentration of users, especially canoeists, in some areas and on some routes. This concentration of users reduces the quality of a visitors' recreational experience, especially where some level of solitude is sought. In addition, user concentration can greatly increase the detrimental affects of human use on different areas. Soil compaction, vegetation removal and nutrient enrichment of water courses are direct results of human use which are accelerated through user concentration.

The Temagami Area is a significant recreational area, offering opportunities for economic development and diversity in the area as well as better distribution of recreational users across the entire land base. Successful promotion of recreational opportunities in the Temagami Area depends on consistent efforts to maintain the existing recreational features across the entire Area, including Conservation Reserves thereby providing all visitors with a high quality experience.

Management Options:

Option 1: No change from current status

- No changes to existing situation, meaning that visitors would continue to make use of the CRs in an unregulated manner
- Continued concentration of users in some CRs or parts of CRs, lack of users in other equally suitable areas

Option 2: Development of partnerships between MNR and one or more external groups or stakeholders, such as municipalities, local First Nations or stakeholders to take over responsibility to develop and implement a visitor management system in cooperation and under the direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

- The maintenance partnerships could have responsibility to monitor and control the number of permits which are issued for recreational activities such as overnight camping within a given CR over a specified period of time
- The maintenance partnerships could promote use of alternate areas within the planning area, encouraging better distribution of users
- The maintenance partnerships, under the direction of MNR would be required to develop a locally based fee schedule for different uses and users of conservation reserves and unregulated Crown land, in consideration of a wide variety of factors, such as local residency, nature of business being affected, other existing permits or licenses held by recreationists.

Option 3: Tendering of responsibility for development and implementation of a visitor management system for Temagami to one or more private contractors.

- Under this option, development and implementation of a visitor management system affecting the recreational land base would be tendered to one or more private contractors, under the direction of, but not in partnership with MNR and without a requirement to involve local municipalities or First Nations.

3.4 Adventure racing and "extreme" sports

Discussion

An emerging issue which may need to be addressed in the future is use of the conservation reserves to support adventure racing or other 'extreme' sports which are gaining some popularity, and which are not addressed in any way in the existing Temagami Land Use Plan.

At present, many activities, such as mountain biking or hiking, which one might associate with adventure racing or other 'extreme' sports, are permitted within these conservation reserves. Motorized recreation is generally prohibited within the conservation reserves subject to the TIP project. Provincial conservation reserve policy does not specifically address organized adventure racing.

Protection of the ecological integrity of conservation reserves remains of paramount importance in the planning and management of conservation reserves.

Management options:

Option 1: While the question of adventure racing or other 'extreme' sports has been raised, it is not within the purview of this planning process to provide a definitive position of where such activities can or cannot occur within TIP conservation reserves beyond the direction already included in the *TLUP*.

Option 2: Recognize existing limitations on the control of this type of activity, much of which requires no prior approval from MNR in advance of the event. When given the opportunity to 'approve' or control aspects of this activity, ensure that it is directed away from sensitive and significant ecological or physiographic features within the CR.

3.5 Protection of sensitive features, such as the parabolic dune complex or esker kame complex in East Lady Evelyn Lake CR

Discussion

With the exception of forestry, mining, aggregate extraction and hydro-electric development, most 'normal' uses of Crown land, such as hunting, angling, canoeing and hiking are permitted within conservation reserves. At the present time, uses permitted within the CRs subject to TIP are described in the *Temagami Land Use Plan* or the

Crown Land Use Policy Atlas. Potential exists for some of the uses permitted in the *TLUP* or through the Crown Land Use Policy Atlas (where it applies) or where the TLUP is silent, to have a negative effect on the ecological or physiographic sustainability of specific sensitive features such as those referenced above. As noted previously, protection of the ecological integrity of conservation reserves remains of paramount importance in the planning and management of conservation reserves.

The Lady Evelyn Lake dune or esker complex consists of a series of narrow parallel sand and gravel eskers which became partially submerged when the Mattawapika dam was constructed in the 1920s. The complex is susceptible to erosion and compaction by recreation use, especially by visitors climbing up the unstable slopes from the water's edge. To address this concern, some of the campsites on the complex were posted to prohibit camping in 2005.

Management Options:

Option1: No change from current land use direction

Under this option, no additional measures will occur. Some parts of the complex, for example, will continue to be posted to prohibit camping. As well, existing direction included in the *Temagami Land Use Plan* and, where it applies or where *TLUP* is silent, the provincial Crown Land Use Policy Atlas will be followed for this and other TIP CRs.

Option 2: Informal sensitive/significant feature management/protection strategy (MNR's current approach)

Under this option, sensitive or significant features within CRs would be recognized and protected using any available tool such as 'posting' or site specific use prohibition under the *Public Lands Act*, or subsequent legislation, coupled with appropriate levels of enforcement to ensure that restrictions are implemented.

4.0 Issues and Options: Specific Conservation Reserves Within TIP

4.1 Pinetorch Lake Conservation Reserve

Road crossing in the east end of Pinetorch Lake CR

Discussion

In the *Temagami Land Use Plan*, accessing a large portion of land-locked Crown lands for forest management purposes was identified as a concern. The land-locked area is Management Area 51, Landers Lake, a special management area. The area is surrounded by three conservation reserves.

To address the concern, the Plan includes a strategy for a single tertiary road crossing of Pinetorch Lake Conservation Reserve, if necessary, to access the southwest corner of Management Area 51 and requires rehabilitation of the road when no longer required.

Forest industry has expressed interest in crossing the conservation reserve at another location—a more southeasterly location. Specifically, the industry would like to cross the Pinetorch CR with a road from the north to access Blocks 40 and 41 which are located in Delhi Twp, south of the CR. This would permit harvest from Blocks 40 and 41 and haulage of harvested wood north and east using the Red Squirrel Road Extension and the Red Squirrel Road.

There appears to be evidence on aerial photos of a trail, but no history of a pre-existing road that went all the way across the CR.

The management plan for the Pinetorch Lake CR must include an indication of if and where a temporary road crossing of this CR will be permitted for forest management purposes. Specific planning of such a crossing will occur through the forest management planning process and in accordance with the Class EA for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.

Management Options:

Option 1: No change from current status
The existing TLUP provides for construction of a temporary road crossing in the southwest corner of this conservation reserve, but in no other locations.

Option 2: Permit a single, temporary road crossing of the CR for forest management purposes, in any one location.

- Similar to direction included in existing TLUP, except allows for alternative location of road crossing.

Option 3: Permit more than one temporary road crossing of this CR.

- Could result in multiple temporary road crossings of this CR.

4.2 East Lady Evelyn Lake, Sugar Lake, Bob Lake, Smith Lake CRs

Private and commercial caching of boats

Discussion

Caching (or storage) of boats on Crown land is an activity which has occurred for many years. It is undertaken by both private users of Crown land and commercial businesses in order to simplify use of remote lakes to which direct motor vehicle access is not available. Cached boats can be used by recreationists who need only bring with them a small motor or paddles. Unfortunately, in some locations, so many boats have been cached, cached in inappropriate locations or abandoned that conflicts with other users occurs. The issues that result in locations where boat caching is very popular are an undervaluing of the recreational experiences and making portaging and launching of other boats difficult.

Management Options:

Option 1: No change from current status

- Existing boat cache user conflicts, which exist in some locations, will continue unaddressed

Option 2: Establish a boat cache management system and apply it to all boat caches within these CRs.

- Management system would apply to all boat caching, be it for personal or commercial purposes

Option 3: Establish a boat cache management system and apply it on an 'as needed basis' to lakes and boat caches within these CRs.

- Management system would apply to all boat caching, be it for personal or commercial purposes, but would only be applied in locations where problems (user conflicts) have been identified.

Option 4: Prohibit boat caching of any kind within these CRs.

5.0 Issues and Options: Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Wilderness Park and Four Waterway Parks: Makobe-Grays River, Obabika River, Solace and Sturgeon River

Introduction

This section discusses possible management options for topics related specifically to the protection, management and use of the one wilderness and four waterway class parks in this planning process.

A brief overview of the purpose and objectives of provincial parks is provided below. Also briefly outlined is the role that park classification and zoning plays in the development of management options. For further information, please refer to:

- *Provincial Parks Act* RSO 1990 and regulations[2].
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1992. *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies 1992 Update.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1997. *Temagami Land Use Plan.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2004. *Temagami Integrated Planning: Terms of Reference*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *Protecting what sustains us: Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *Our Sustainable Future: Ministry of Natural Resources, Strategic Directions.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *Temagami Integrated Planning: Background Information.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.*

Provincial Park Goals and Objectives

The **overall goal** of Ontario Parks is to provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and to protect provincially significant natural, cultural and recreational environments in a system of provincial parks.

There are **four objectives** which provide specific direction for the management of the park system.

- ***Protection:*** to protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario.

- ***Recreation:*** to provide Provincial Park outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high-intensity day-use to low-intensity wilderness experiences.

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[2] The new *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*, 2006 received Royal assent on June 20, 2006. When the new legislation is proclaimed, it will replace the current legislation. This Management Options document makes reference to the current legislation; however future planning stages will be directed by the newly enacted legislation for provincial parks and conservation reserves.

- ***Heritage Appreciation:*** to provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.

- ***Tourism:*** to provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the province.

Park Classification

There are six different ***classes*** or types of parks found within our system of provincial parks. They range from more intensely developed and used recreation parks to the relatively undisturbed and less–frequented wilderness and nature reserve class parks. Within the Temagami Integrated Planning (TIP) process, we are planning for one ***wilderness*** and four ***waterway*** class parks.

Wilderness Parks
Wilderness parks are substantial areas where the forces of nature are permitted to function freely and where visitors travel by non-mechanized means and experience expansive solitude, challenge and personal integration with nature.

Today, wilderness parks have inestimable value as the last relatively undisturbed large examples of the province's natural heritage. The preservation of these areas is important to the perpetuation and natural evolution of plant and animal species and ecosystems in Ontario. They are also valuable for recreation, education and research. These areas can support a diversity of plant and animal species, including some, such as moose or timber wolves, which require large range conditions to survive

Environmental protection is of ultimate importance; visitor activity is normally confined to low-intensity and low-impact forms of recreation.

Wilderness parks provide opportunities for exceptional recreational experiences with challenge, solitude and total immersion into our natural and cultural heritage.

Waterway Parks
Waterway parks incorporate outstanding recreational water routes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences.

Park Zoning

Just as there are different ***classes*** of parks to serve different purposes, we also have a range of possible ***zones*** that may be designated within a given class of park to further delineate the level of protection or use that may be permitted, based on the natural, cultural and recreational features within the park.

Zoning allocates lands and waters based on their protection requirements and potential for recreation. Zones provide a range of opportunities for recreation, heritage appreciation and education, while maintaining the integrity of the resources upon which recreation opportunities are based.

Zoning is based on the reality that visitors do not use all resources in the same way and that all activities are not carried out everywhere, nor should they be. For example, an area with provincially significant vegetation or wildlife features may be damaged by high-intensity recreation activities. Therefore a nature reserve zone designation may be chosen which restricts uses to very low-impact recreation. Policies related to permitted uses and development in each zone serve as guidelines for park management planning.

There are six zone types that apply to the park management planning process. Table 1 outlines the various park class and zone associations. The presence or absence of a zone in a particular park class depends on the philosophy and objectives of that class. For example, as a wilderness class park, Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park can have four types of zones: Nature Reserve, Wilderness, Historical and Access.

Table 1: Zone Possibilities by Park Class

Park Class	***Zone Type***					
	Natural Environment (NE)	Nature Reserve (NR)	Wilderness (W)	Historical (H)	Access (A)	Development (D)
Wilderness*		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nature Reserve		✓		✓	✓	
Historical	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Natural Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waterway*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recreation	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

*Note that in wilderness class parks, there are four possible types of zones, while in waterway class parks, it is possible to have all six zone types. In the Temagami Integrated Planning process (TIP), we are dealing with both wilderness and waterway class parks, as highlighted in the above table.

Nature Reserve Zones protect provincially significant earth and life science features which require management distinct from that in adjacent zones, and may include a protective buffer area in which a minimum of development is permitted. Development is generally restricted to trails, necessary signs, interpretive facilities (where warranted) and temporary facilities for research and management.

Wilderness Zones include wilderness landscapes of appropriate size and integrity which protect significant natural and cultural features and are suitable for wilderness experiences. They support back-country recreation such as canoeing or hiking. Development is limited to wilderness campsites, portages, trails and signs necessary for route identification. Wilderness campsites (canoe- or hike-in) are established at a very low density and offer limited facilities such as designated fireplaces and pit privies, in keeping with the character of the landscape which the zone protects.

Resource management policies are directed where possible toward achieving minimum human intervention and the maintenance of evolving natural succession. Wilderness zones may occur only in wilderness, waterway or natural environment class parks.

Natural Environment Zones include natural landscapes which permit the minimum level of development required to support low-intensity recreational activities.

Development is generally limited to backcountry campsites, portages, necessary signs and minimal self-use interpretive facilities.

Resource management policies for natural environment zones may be more permissive than those for wilderness and nature reserve zones in allowing human intervention to maintain or improve aesthetics, wildlife habitat, etc.
Natural environment zones often serve as buffers between development or access zones and the more protection-oriented wilderness, historical or nature reserve zones. Natural environment zones may appear in waterway, recreation, natural environment or historical class parks.

Historical Zones encompass the provincially significant cultural resources of a park. They generally focus on a specific site (e.g., occupation site, building) and that site's relationship to the surrounding landscape, so they may include a protective buffer around the main feature in the zone. Development is limited to trails, necessary signs, interpretive, educational, research and management facilities, and historical restorations or reconstruction where appropriate.

Access Zones serve as staging areas where minimum facilities support the use of nature reserve or wilderness zones and less developed natural environment and historical zones. Access zones provide, and regulate, use in areas of a park geared towards more extensive recreation. Development is generally limited to roads, visitor control structures and group campgrounds. There may be limited orientation, interpretive or educational facilities, which are generally self-use. Limited facilities for research and park management may also be present.

Campground development in access zones normally occurs only in those classes of parks where development zones are not permitted, that is, in wilderness, waterway, historical and nature reserve parks. Infrastructure is intended to meet the needs of park visitors entering or exiting from the park's interior. As such, only very basic facilities are provided.

Access zones may occur in all six park classes, but are generally found only in those parks with large interior areas (wilderness, waterway and natural environment) used for back-country recreation such as canoeing or backpacking.

Development Zones provide the main access to the park and facilities and services for a wide range of day-use and camping activities. They constitute a relatively small portion of most parks. Development may include roads, visitor control structures, beaches, picnic areas, car campgrounds, commercial service facilities as well as orientation, interpretive, educational, research and management facilities.

Development zones may appear in waterway, historical, natural environment and recreation class parks, but are most common in the latter two. No provision for a development zone exists in nature reserve or wilderness park classifications, because of their strong orientation toward protection.

Provincial Park Operations in Temagami's Backcountry Parks

In 2004 Ontario Parks commenced the operational status of the five backcountry parks, and implemented an overnight camping fee system. Park operations, including canoe route maintenance, monitoring, compliance and education, have been funded by the fees collected from camping permits.

Park wardens/maintenance staff ensure that backcountry recreational amenities such as portages, campsites, privies and signage are maintained to enhance the visitor's experience. They also monitor use and ensure compliance with park regulations to protect park resources.

Provincial parks are operated under the authority of the *Provincial Parks Act*. Park operating plans are prepared for each operating park in accordance with the park management plan and current Ministry policies, procedures and guidelines. The plan will address the management and operation of all park facilities and activities. This includes visitor quotas and travel restrictions. In accordance with provincial regulations[3], the Park Superintendent may control the number of interior camping permits issued to prevent overcrowding and to protect the environment.

A schedule of provincial park fees is set by the Minister and applies to all operating parks across the province. The current fees for the five backcountry parks in Temagami are consistent with the fees in similar backcountry parks.

All operating parks must meet minimum operating standards as set out by provincial park policy. As a part of ongoing park operations, a visitor distribution program, quotas, or other visitor controls may be implemented as necessary to protect park resources and ensure a quality experience for backcountry visitors.

Provincial Parks Management Policies

Provincial park management policies are applied across the entire province within the available range of park classifications and zones. Comments received during the public review periods for individual park plans are carefully considered and where possible incorporated into park management planning direction as much as possible. However management direction for uses or activities in parks must be consistent with provincial park policy.

Protecting the Environment

Throughout this document reference is made to ***environmental protection*** as it pertains to the natural and cultural environment within the wilderness and waterway class parks in this planning process. During the present management options stage—as well as future stages in the planning process—consideration must be made to how decisions we make today will affect the parks' values and resources tomorrow.

Protecting the environment and maintaining ecological integrity consists of many aspects and is difficult to measure. While science can provide a good level of understanding of

[3] O. Reg. 952, Section 14 (11).

ecosystem structure, composition and function, we know that ecosystems are complex, constantly changing and still not fully understood.

This represents a significant challenge for park managers who must work with incomplete ecological information during the preparation of this park management plan. These conditions warrant an ***adaptive management*** approach. By developing and monitoring indicators of management effectiveness, park managers can identify inadequate management actions. Management strategies can then be redesigned and adapted to reflect new information in a timely manner and limit impacts to park ecological integrity.

Adaptive management is a practical approach to improving resource management. This approach means that there is a process in place for implementing resource management decisions, monitoring and evaluating the outcomes, and using the information to continually improve management direction.

Management Options

This document outlines a range of options pertaining to human uses and human needs. While weighing the different options, please consider also the long term needs of park ecosystems and the natural and cultural resources within them. Consider the effects of today's actions on tomorrow's legacy—our parks and protected areas. How do we address the need for recreational and economic opportunities today while protecting the values for future generations?

Seven topics are outlined below, along with discussion and a range of options. Each topic includes a brief background including a summary of related legislative and/or policy direction, as well as actual or potential impacts to park values or features. This is followed by the presentation of possible management policies (options) to address the topic.

For two additional management topics, where there is no range of options, these are briefly discussed; however further discussion and consideration will be undertaken at the ***Preliminary Management Plan*** stage.

5.1 Aircraft Landings in Provincial Parks

Discussion:

Access into park water bodies by floatplane in summer and ski-equipped aircraft in winter has been a long-standing use in northern Ontario. In the Temagami area private and commercial aircraft are used for accessing canoe routes and commercial outpost camps, fishing and sight-seeing. Mechanized intrusions and noise may impact on the wilderness experience of park visitors. While some backcountry canoeists are concerned about the intrusion of aircraft and associated impacts on their wilderness experience, others rely on aircraft to access or exit from their canoe trips through the parks or adjacent Crown lands.

Related impacts include the potential of increased fishing pressures in remote lakes. Boat caches are an issue discussed further in this document, and some boat caches are associated with aircraft access by commercial operators. From a management perspective, air access into some areas may also increase visitor use of specific canoe routes which would otherwise receive lower use due to their remoteness.

At the present time, private pilots and commercial operators may land float planes or ski-equipped aircraft within the wilderness park or the four waterway class parks by obtaining a permit from the Park Superintendent. Permits are currently free-of-charge and can be renewed annually through Finlayson Point Provincial Park. There are presently no restrictions on where pilots may land within any of the five parks.

Actual or potential impacts associated with aircraft use include:

- conflicts with other backcountry users seeking solitude
- disturbance of wildlife
- noise, water and air pollution
- fuel, oil, hazardous materials spills
- introduction of exotic/invasive species
- associated uses/pressures due to increased access (fishing pressures, transport of cans, bottles, firearms or other prohibited materials, etc.)

The policy for mechanized travel in provincial parks is as follows:

Wilderness Class: Private use of motorized vehicles, aircraft and watercraft will not be permitted, except for access purposes in Access Zones.

Waterway Class: Generally, motorized land vehicles, aircraft and watercraft of any kind will normally not be permitted except in Development, Access and Natural Environment Zones.

The status quo situation of unrestricted aircraft landings in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater is in conflict with policy for wilderness class provincial parks and is thus not considered as an option. The park's wilderness designation is intended to provide a high level of environmental protection. It also provides an opportunity for visitors to experience remote wilderness landscapes free of contact with motorized vehicles, including aircraft. For these reasons, a range of restrictions is being considered.

Consideration should be given to the degree of differentiation made between private and commercial aircraft operations within various zones in both wilderness and waterway parks. Park policy is generally more permissive, for example, of commercial tourist operations in accessing their outpost camps. Similarly, aircraft operations, both private and commercial, are less restrictive in waterway class parks. As an example, a heavily used lake in a waterway park with both commercial and private land holdings such as Lady Evelyn Lake would see minimal or no restrictions.

Management Options:

Note: in all options, the emergency landing of aircraft in distress is permitted, as is aircraft access to provide assistance to persons in distress.

Park management and research activities also require the occasional use of aircraft. The decision to permit landings in restricted areas for these activities will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Park Superintendent.

Option 1: Permit aircraft landings (private and commercial) only on designated lakes in Access zones within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater. Landing on all other water bodies would be prohibited. Landing permits would continue to be a requirement and fees may be instituted.

- This option would develop Access zones within the park which would permit aircraft to land on those water bodies contained within the access zone. This would address the needs of both private and commercial pilots for access to the park by aircraft, although on a more restricted basis than currently exists. This recognizes the need to maintain a remote wilderness experience for canoeists.

- The intent of provincial park policy is addressed by this option. Access zones would be monitored for impacts by Ontario Parks, and where required additional restrictions may be implemented.

Option 2: Prohibit aircraft landing (private and commercial) on all water bodies within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park.

- This option offers environmental protection from mechanized use as well as enhances the aesthetics and wilderness experience. This option conforms to park policy for wilderness class parks.

- While conforming to existing parks policy, this option fails to recognize that in many cases, aircraft landing within the park is causing minimal conflict, and may in fact be supporting park use. In addition the economic benefits to the local economy from commercial operations flying users into the heart of the parks would be lost.

Option 3: ***This option pertains to the four waterway parks only and would be in addition to either option 1 or 2 above***. This would include aircraft landing on specific water bodies in the four ***waterway*** parks.

- Parks policy does allow aircraft landings in waterway parks, but only in certain zone types where deemed appropriate. If required for environmental or human conflict reasons, restrictions may be placed in certain zones. Similarly, in other zones the use of aircraft may be encouraged. Note that park policy is generally less restrictive of aircraft access in waterway parks; however, specific water bodies may require restrictions to be considered.

- In this option, key lakes would be identified with respect to their environmental sensitivity or the degree of conflict with other users, and considered for closure to aircraft landing.

5.2 Future Use of the Liskeard Lumber Road in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park

Discussion:

The Liskeard Lumber Road branches southward from the Beauty Lake Road and traverses the central part of Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater, crossing both the north and south branches of the Lady Evelyn River. Decommissioned as a forest access road in 1994, it has remained open to the public and to commercial outfitters for recreational purposes. MNR allows *interim* recreational use of this un-maintained road from mid-September to mid-June each year. During peak season (June 15-Sept.15) each year, a gate 300 metres north of the bridge crossing the North Lady Evelyn River restricts road access further south through the park. [4]

The road extends 15 kilometres south of the park through Jim Edwards Conservation Reserve (CR 55) to the Wakimika Gate, in Acadia Township, where it connects with the Red Squirrel Road Extension. This gate is permanently closed and locked to prevent access to the Red Squirrel Road system.

In October 1996, the north bridge was burned in an act of vandalism; this upset the status quo which allows access through the park *pending decisions to be made during the park management planning process*. The bridge was rebuilt by MNR in order to maintain status quo. The south bridge has deteriorated naturally to a state where only two steel I-beams remain and the bridge is no longer passable.

The Liskeard Lumber Road currently allows seasonal motor vehicle access through the heart of the wilderness park. It also enables unrestricted ATV access beyond the road, into this area of the park. In winter, the road corridor is used as an unauthorized snowmobile route connecting Elk Lake to Temagami. This route connects the Beauty Lake Road to the Red Squirrel Road extension, bypassing the Wakimika and Aston gates on the Red Squirrel Road.

Hunting occurs south of the park boundary in Jim Edwards Conservation Reserve as well as unregulated Crown land south of the CR.

The policy for mechanized travel in a wilderness class park is as follows:
Private use of motorized vehicles, aircraft and watercraft will not be permitted, except for access purposes in Access zones.
Core to this topic are the following issues:

- The interest in mechanized travel south of the park. The land use intent for Jim Edwards Conservation Reserve as outlined in the *Temagami Land Use Plan* is for *non-motorized backcountry recreation*, with the decisions regarding road access from the north to be determined through the park management planning process.[5]

- The appropriateness of a mechanized travel corridor through the middle of a wilderness park. The road essentially cuts the wilderness park in half, fragmenting an

[4] This restriction and dates are stipulated in *An Environmental Assessment for Primary Access Roads in the Latchford Crown Management Unit* (Red Squirrel Road and Pinetorch Corridor). OMNR, 1988
[5] *Temagami Land Use Plan*, OMNR 1997, pages 139, 140.

area already under pressure from a range of human activities.

- Should an Access zone allow continued access through a wilderness park or conform to the true intent of this zone designation to provide access to the periphery of a wilderness park, from which point visitors disperse by primarily non-mechanized means.

- The associated issues due to enhanced mechanized access (e.g. winter snowmobile travel, unauthorized ATV use, increased angling pressures, potential for illegal hunting, etc.).

Management Options:

Option 1: Create an Access zone which runs the length of the Liskeard Lumber Road through the park.

- Under this option, mechanized public travel through Lady Evelyn - Smoothwater Provincial Park on the Liskeard Lumber Road would continue between September 16 and June 14 annually. The entire length of the Liskeard Lumber Road within the park would be identified as an Access zone conforming to that time period.

- In this option, the adjacent waters of the Lady Evelyn River that are accessible would also be included in the access zone to enable limited motorized boat access for angling when the road is open. Motorized travel would not be permitted during the peak canoe season (June 15-September 15) as is the current situation.

- This option is essentially a continuation of the current status quo situation.

- This option would fragment the core of the wilderness park.

- It should be noted that in this option, even though the Access zone may continue along the existing road corridor, the south bridge will not be reconstructed.

Option 2: Terminate the road at the existing gate location near the north bridge. Designate the road north of this point as a year-round Access zone.

- This option extends the current seasonal restriction beyond the gate for the entire year, but designates the road corridor in the park running south to this point as Access zone.
- This option enables access to the North Branch of the Lady Evelyn River, while prohibiting access beyond the gate through the remainder of the wilderness park.

Option 3: The following option could be combined with Option 2 above. Provide a winter season only Access zone along the remaining road section, thus offering limited snowmobile access along the road corridor.

- In this option, the road section beyond the gate to the south would be a winter access zone, for snowmobile use only, along the road corridor for a specified period each winter.

- Access would be restricted to the existing road corridor itself. No use of other trails or road networks would be permitted. No off-trail snowmobile travel would be permitted.
- Season dates would be set each year by the Park Superintendent.
- No upgrading or enhancement of the trail would be permitted.
- The south bridge will not be reconstructed. Snowmobile access beyond this point is across river ice during peak of winter only.
- This option may be considered as an addition to Option 2 above.

Option 4: Shorten the section of road open to the public by terminating the road closer to the north park boundary. Develop a staging area for access to the north branch of the Lady Evelyn River.

- The road would be permanently closed and rehabilitated beyond this point. Potential locations include Weedend Lake and Elissa/Gamble Lake. Ensure water bodies are inaccessible to direct vehicle access in order to control motorized access to the Lady Evelyn River (e.g. minimum portage requirements from staging area to water's edge).
- This option would allow access into but not through the park. Specific location decisions would enable access to the upper Lady Evelyn River system, also possibly into Trethewey and Banks lakes. We would need to discuss zoning options for these lakes regarding forms of access permitted, the ecological integrity of these lakes, fisheries management concerns etc.
- This option would fulfill provincial park policy for wilderness parks by enabling access into, but not through, the park. Beyond this access zone, travel would be permitted by non-mechanized means only.
- This option would result in the permanent closure of at least part of the road. An assessment would be made to determine the extent of road bed rehabilitation required to ameliorate long-term impacts. Specifics to address include runoff, erosion and bank stabilization, the removal of culverts, bridges and debris from watercourses.

Option 5: Terminate the road at the park boundary, or north of the park boundary. Remove the road from the park entirely. Develop a staging area adjacent to the park boundary with a campground facility to be operated in partnership with local interests/local government.

- As a preliminary suggestion, the Kaa Lake area might offer a suitable site for this type of development. Canoe access only would occur from this point on, along the north branch of the Lady Evelyn River.
- Similar discussions as in Option 4, only access to the park by mechanized means is further restricted. This would reduce the ability of people to access Trethewey and Banks lakes. It would also involve a lengthy portage into the beginning of navigable waters of the Lady Evelyn River system.

In all options where portions of the road are removed, the rehabilitation of the road bed and bridge structures would be required to help return the area to its natural state and to render the road system impassable in the long term.

5.3 Motorboat Use in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater Provincial Park

Discussion:

There are presently no restrictions on the use of motor boats, horsepower restrictions or limitations on the type or size of boat which can be used within the park. Motorboat use is concentrated predominantly in the following water bodies: Smoothwater, Makobe, Banks, Trethewey, Grays, Tupper, Hobart and Anvil lakes and portions of the Lady Evelyn River.

The policy for mechanized travel within wilderness class parks is as follows:
Private use of motorized vehicles, aircraft and watercraft will not be permitted, except for access purposes in Access zones. Some motorboat use by commercial tourist operations outside the access zones will be permitted, as determined by the park management plan. In addition, restrictions will be made on the size of motors permitted in wilderness parks.

Motor boat use is currently limited by the relative inaccessibility of the park and the difficulty in accessing various lakes by motor boat. The unrestricted use of motorboats in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater conflicts with provincial policy for wilderness class parks, thus the current status quo condition is not an option to be considered.

Core to this topic are the following issues:

- To what extent is current motor boat use for angling affecting park resources? Could impacts be mitigated by various restrictions (locations, horsepower restrictions, etc.) yet still allow for safe, accessible angling opportunities?

- The issue of motor boat access is often tied to motor vehicle use to gain access to the lakes in question. Could limited boat use be accommodated on specific water bodies without allowing direct access by motor vehicle?

- An associated issue is the appropriateness and control of boat caches (covered in the following topic).

- A separate consideration is the need to control motor boat use on specific water bodies in the *waterway* parks which are impacted or have use conflicts.

Actual or potential impacts associated with motorboat use include:
- conflicts with other users seeking a wilderness experience
- disturbance of wildlife
- noise, water and air pollution
- fuel spills
- introduction of exotic/invasive species

Management Options:

Option 1: Create specific Access zones within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater where motor boats are permitted. Restrictions would be implemented to minimize environmental and aesthetic impacts; these could include motor horsepower limits, seasonal restrictions and/or the restriction of vehicular access to the lakes.

- This option conforms to provincial park policy for wilderness parks while allowing limited use of motor boats, thus accommodating existing uses such as angling.

Option 2: Prohibit all motorboats within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater.

- This option conforms to provincial parks policy and emphasizes the protection requirements for wilderness parks.

- This option fails to recognize that in some cases, motorboats within the park are causing minimal conflict with other park users, and would reduce the angling opportunities for area residents and visitors. In addition, economic benefits to the local economy from commercial operators offering motorboats to their clients in the park would be lost.

5.4 Boat Caches (private and commercial) within the wilderness and waterway parks

Discussion:

Caching (storage) of boats within the five parks is an activity which has occurred for many years. It is undertaken by both private individuals and tourist outfitters to simplify access to remote lakes without direct motor vehicle access. Cached boats enable boaters to walk in, or in some instances fly in, carrying only a small motor or paddles.

Under the *Provincial Parks Act*, Regulation 952, Sec. 25(1) it is an offence to leave a boat unattended in a provincial park without written permission of the Park Superintendent, thus the current status quo situation is not an option to be considered.

In some locations, so many boats have been cached or cached in inappropriate locations that it impacts other users by blocking portages, landings etc.. This detracts from recreational experiences and makes portaging or launching of other boats difficult. In many instances, cached boats have simply been abandoned and left to deteriorate.

Core to this topic are the following issues:

- This issue pertains to the caching of all watercraft, including boats and canoes.

- Typically, boat caches occur at the end of portages, often creating obstacles for portage users.

- The topic of boat caches is linked to the preceding topic of motor boat access. Any restriction to boat access or motor vehicle access may have implications—both for

and against—the need for boat caches.

- As with all backcountry use, there is a need to provide information and education to inform users of proper backcountry "etiquette".

Management Options:

Option 1: Establish a boat cache management system within the wilderness and waterway parks. The management system would determine appropriate cache locations based upon use patterns as well as environmental and aesthetic impacts within the park.

- A cache management system would apply to both commercial and private caches and may include permits and fee structure.

Option 2: Prohibit all boat caching within the wilderness park and waterway parks.

- This option minimizes environmental and aesthetic concerns as well as user conflicts associated with cached or abandoned boats; however, it does not address the needs of existing anglers accessing semi-remote lakes.

Option 3: Prohibit all boat caching within the wilderness park, while establishing a managed cache system for the four waterway parks.

- This option minimizes environmental and aesthetic concerns in the core wilderness park, but still allows for access to other water bodies by anglers.

5.5 Wilderness Snowmobile Trail (former TOPS A206) Through Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater

Discussion:

MNR's former Temagami District granted *interim* access, with restrictions, for a snowmobile trail through the wilderness class park during the Temagami Comprehensive Planning Process. Access was granted to a local snowmobile club in 1990 to connect Elk Lake with the provincial (TOPS) snowmobile trail system; however, this was done on an *interim* basis only *pending decisions to be made during park management planning.* Note that the area was regulated as a wilderness class park in 1983, seven years prior to the trail being given interim approval.

The trail crosses the western portion of the park parallel to Ishpatina Ridge through Smoothwater, Apex, Mculloch, Mihell and Scarecrow lakes and the associated canoe portages. As a local "connector" trail, it was designated as A206 in the TOPS system; however, this designation has since been removed[6].

[6] The trail does not meet TOPS standards for development or maintenance. This is in part due to the existing canoe portages in the wilderness class park which pre-date the trail. Large groomers cannot be accommodated on the narrow trails, or on the capricious ice conditions often found on the lakes.

The existing management policy for mechanized travel in wilderness class parks is as follows: Private use of motorized vehicles, aircraft and watercraft will not be permitted, except for access purposes in Access zones.

Core to this topic are the following issues:

- Area residents and businesses wish to see the snowmobile trail's continued existence through the park. They support widening or upgrading the trail in order to meet provincial snowmobile trail standards. The route traverses a series of historic canoe portages linking lakes within this wilderness park.

- Continued use of the trail will change the character of the existing canoe portages even though the uses are separated by season. This part of the park protects scenic and sacred landscapes, including Ishpatina Ridge, the highest point in Ontario, and Smoothwater Lake, one of the larger lakes in the park.

- Alternatives for snowmobile access to the west of the park can be explored.

- Access through the wilderness park was granted on an interim basis only.

Management Options:

Option 1: Retain the existing snowmobile trail by designating the corridor as an Access zone. Conditions would be made to restrict trail use in terms of a limited winter season, a limited level of maintenance and prohibiting off-trail travel.

- This option does not meet the intent of park policy for wilderness parks, where mechanized vehicles would only provide access to, not through, wilderness parks.

- This option does not address the need to protect the naturally and culturally significant areas of the wilderness park.

- This option does address the needs of local and regional snowmobile users to have access to this area; however other opportunities exist in all areas around the park.

- In this option, there would be no provision for enhancing or upgrading the route beyond its current condition. The widening or altering of existing canoe portages would not be permitted.

Option 2: Relocate the snowmobile trail outside the wilderness park. Explore alternate route options to the west of the park boundary utilizing existing tertiary roads where possible. Maintain the existing snowmobile trail through the park in the short term (five years), while an alternative route is developed outside the park.

- This option addresses park policy and environmental concerns regarding mechanized travel through the wilderness park.

- This option would extend the current interim status of the trail for an additional five years in order to explore and develop an alternate route. If no alternate route is developed in this time period, the phase-out of the existing trail will still occur.

5.6 General All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Use

Discussion:

At the present time, ATV use throughout Lady Evelyn–Smoothwater Provincial Park and the adjoining waterway parks is uncontrolled. While the existing use may be limited, it is anticipated that the level of use in the region will increase dramatically, following the provincial trend for this recreational activity. The current lack of regulation or control is contrary to parks policy.

The policy respecting mechanized travel in provincial parks is as follows:
Wilderness Class – Private use of motorized vehicles, aircraft and watercraft will not be permitted, except for access purposes in Access Zones.
Waterway Class – Generally, motorized land vehicles, aircraft and watercraft of any kind will normally not be permitted except in Development, Access and Natural Environment Zones.

As waterway class parks are typically long, linear protected areas, park policy permits travel *across* the parks as opposed to traveling *parallel to* the park boundaries. In most instances where ATVs are permitted, a trail or road was a pre-existing condition. Off-trail ATV travel can create significant environmental degradation in a very short period of time. Similarly, conflicts with other users are an issue in some areas. For this reason, an option of status quo will not be considered.

Actual or potential impacts of ATV use include:
- rutting, trail compaction, erosion
- damage to vegetation communities
- conflicts with other users e.g. reduced quality of backcountry experience.
- disturbance of wildlife
- noise and air pollution
- fuel, oil spills
- introduction of exotic/invasive species

Management options:

Option 1: Designate specific zones within the parks as access zones, permitting ATV use only in these locations.

- Certain locations within the parks could be recognized to permit ATV use, while prohibiting such travel in other locations, thereby meeting the intent of parks policy.

Option 2: Prohibit all ATV travel within the wilderness and waterway class parks.

- This option conforms with parks policy, but fails to recognize that in some cases, ATV travel causes minimal direct conflict as the operators stay on pre-existing roads cutting directly across waterway parks. In addition, the economic benefits to the local economy from commercial tourist operations using ATVs would be lost.

Option 3: Prohibit ATV travel in Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater (wilderness class) while allowing limited ATV use across the waterway class parks through access zones.

- This option conforms to park policy and protects core wilderness areas from disturbance while still allowing restricted access across waterway parks. No off-road ATV use would be permitted.

5.7 Commercial Land Use Permits Within the Provincial Parks

Discussion:

At present, there are four commercial[7] Land Use Permits (LUP) issued within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater and the four adjoining waterway parks. These LUPs support existing commercial tourism businesses.

Provincial park policy for commercial operations in wilderness and waterway class parks is as follows:

Land disposition for *commercial* use may occur, under the authority of a land use permit or lease, provided that the proposed commercial use can be demonstrated to be complementary to the park's goal and objectives, and provided that the proposal is subject to public consultation through a park management plan or plan amendment.

The relocation or reconstruction of an existing commercial LUP may be considered if the facilities have been destroyed by natural causes. The reconstructed structure is not to be expanded in size or guest capacity from the original structure. If relocation occurs, the new location must be approved by MNR and all Ministry policies must be adhered to.

Existing authorized tourism facilities within the park additions are permitted to continue, but are subject to management prescriptions determined through management planning.

New commercial tourism facilities and trails may be considered where consistent with park policy. Any proposed development within park boundaries must fulfill the requirements of the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

Associated potential issues include boat caches, commercial fly-in operations, fuel wood and the disposal of garbage and human waste.

Management Options:

Option 1: No change from current status

- Existing commercial LUPs will continue to operate within the parks, subject to possible conditions identified during park management planning (for example, the identification of sensitive areas, the establishment of Nature Reserve zones etc). There will be no consideration for relocating these LUPs elsewhere in the parks.

Option 2: Phase out existing commercial LUPs from the parks.

[7] This topic considers only commercial LUPs. Private recreational LUPs are not discussed here since, under provincial park policy for wilderness and waterway class parks regulated prior to the 1999 *Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy*, all forms of existing tenure issued by the Crown for private use—land use permits, licences of occupation, leases—will be phased out by January 1, 2010.

- Existing commercial LUPs would be phased out within the parks by a specific date. Ontario Parks would work with MNR district staff to determine if alternate locations for displaced commercial LUPs can be found within the Temagami planning area.

5.8 Other Topics

The seven topics discussed above were derived from comments received at open houses as well as written comments sent in response to the *Temagami Integrated Planning Background Information* document released in summer 2005. These comments were further vetted through three focus group sessions held in Temagami, New Liskeard and Toronto in April 2006.

The above topics capture the areas of greatest interest with respect to management and use of the five parks; however, this list is by no means exhaustive. We encourage readers to bring forward further topics and options for discussion throughout this phase of the planning process.

Topics to be addressed in the Preliminary Management Plan

The following topics do not have specific options presented at this stage. These issues are broader in scope than the specific wilderness and waterway parks in Temagami. They link to broader issues regarding fire management and fisheries management at MNR's district, regional and provincial levels. These larger-scale issues require broader policy direction than can be applied solely at the individual park management plan level.

Forest Fire Management in the Wilderness Park

Discussion:

As a wilderness class provincial park, Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater is a place where natural processes are permitted to occur freely. The occurrence of natural fires in certain wilderness environments is recognized as a process integral to an evolving natural succession. The current suppression of all forest fire within the park does not allow natural processes to occur freely.

Detailed planning will be required to re-introduce fire to parks in Ontario. In addition, the application of fire in parks will require a firm understanding of science, monitoring and measurement of ecosystem status, planning for safe and effective fire use through prescribed burning and prescribed fire. The fire management program will continue to discuss these science, planning and fire management policies and programs in partnership with Ontario Parks.

Fire Management Plans will be developed for each park in the province's Parks Fire Management Zone[8]. A Fire Management Plan for Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater will be developed subsequent to the completed park management plan.

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[8] The Parks Zone was created in recognition of the fact that fire is an essential ecological process fundamental to ecosystem health and sustainability. Fire is now underrepresented in many of Ontario's provincial parks and other protected areas. Included in the parks zone are large Wilderness class and

In the absence of an approved plan, the present fire response level for fires within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater is that they will generally receive full response and sustained action until extinguished. MNR's fire management program recognizes the need to be sensitive to environmentally and culturally significant sites that may be disturbed by fire suppression activities. MNR will use ***light on the land*** techniques to reduce human impact during fire response in the park where sensitive values have been identified. Techniques include limiting the use of heavy equipment or limiting the number of trees felled during fire response efforts whenever feasible, commensurate with the risk and potential behaviour of the fire.

Angling and Fisheries Management in the Wilderness and Waterway Parks

Discussion:

As described earlier, the protection objective in provincial parks is paramount, and applies to both terrestrial and aquatic environments. Angling is a permitted activity to the extent compatible with the maintenance of healthy, native fish populations. Within wilderness class parks, policy prohibits the use and possession of baitfish, and places greater emphasis on the maintenance of native, self-sustaining populations.

Fishing regulations are enacted to ensure that fish populations remain both healthy and sustainable, while providing angling opportunities whenever possible. Generally, regulated catch and possession limits for waters within provincial parks are consistent with the broader fisheries management zones. Within Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater, a few exceptions to the general regulations were enacted to support recovery of species-at-risk and sensitive fish communities which presently cannot sustain angling pressure. These waters also act as reference sites for environmental research and monitoring. The preliminary park management plan will include direction for fisheries management.

Natural Environment class parks where fire can reasonably achieve a more natural role in the restoration and maintenance of the integrity, health and sustainability of the ecosystems these parks were designed to protect. As with all parks, the health and safety of park visitors and park infrastructure is the utmost priority and will be protected. For further discussion, refer to *Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario*, OMNR 2004.

6.0 Next Steps

The planning team will accept comments on the Management Options document during the 45-day public review period which follows its release. To assist us in reviewing and considering your input, please complete the enclosed questionnaire. The future resource management direction for the various components of the TIP project will be based, in part, on the results of this public consultation process.

Management direction will be outlined in the next documents to be produced, the preliminary management plans, tentatively scheduled for release in the fall of 2006. Your comments, participation and knowledge are important to ensure that we produce the best possible plans for the provincial parks, conservation reserves and Crown lands subject to TIP.

Thank you for participating in this process!

7.0 References

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1988. *An Environmental Assessment for Primary Access Roads in the Latchford Crown Management Unit* (Red Squirrel Road and Pinetorch Corridor).

Provincial Parks Act RSO 1990 and regulations[9].

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Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.*

[9] The new *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*, 2006 received Royal assent on June 20, 2006. When the new legislation is proclaimed, it will replace the current legislation. This Management Options document makes reference to the current legislation; however future planning stages will be directed by the newly enacted legislation for provincial parks and conservation reserves.